Centrally Sponsored Scheme aims to provide benefits for the girl child. The objectives of the scheme are—

(i) To change the negative family and community attitude towards the girl child at birth and towards her mother.

(ii) To improve enrollment and retention of girl children in schools.

(iii) To raise the age at marriage of girls.

(iv) To assist the girl to undertake income generating activities.

The scheme was formally launched on 2nd October, 1997 and recast in 1999. However in the year 2001 the Planning Commission decided that the Centrally Sponsored Scheme Balika Samridhi Yojana should be transferred to States. This decision could not be formally confirmed by the National Development Council. In the mean time because of non-receipt of Utilisation Certificates, funds were not released to the States running the scheme. Now the Department has decided to release funds to those States that have now submitted satisfactory Utilisation Certificates. Funds will be released after making provision in the Revised Estimates under this Head.

(b) Since inception of the scheme in 1997, Rs. 594.02 lakhs has been released to Assam. So far State Government of Assam has submitted utilisation certificates only for Rs. 436.94 lakhs. Due to unspent balance of Rs. 157.08 lakhs with the State, no funds have been released to the Government of Assam during the last three financial years.

Children's Film Festival

*382. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the details of cities hosting children's film festival since 1995,

(b) whether it is a fact that Hyderabad has become a prominent centre for hosting the International Children's Film Festival;

(c) if so, whether Government find any justification in establishing a children's film festival complex at Hyderabad;

(d) if so, whether Government have initiated any move in this direction, and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Since 1995, the International Children's Film Festival has been organized at Hyderabad in collaboration with the Government of Andhra Pradesh, once every two years.

(b) to (e) In the year 1997, Hyderabad was declared as the permanent venue for the International Children's Film Festival. The land handed over to Children's Film Society, India (CFSI) in 1997, for the Children's Film Complex had to be surrendered on account of non receipt of permission for 'change of land use' and opposition from heritage conservationists. Later, while the proposal of construction of the Complex was still under consideration (at different levels), the Expenditure Reforms Commission (ERC) recommended the winding up of CFSI itself. Under these circumstances, the large capital investment required for setting up a complete festival complex with offices and theatres for a festival held for a duration of seven days every two years was not found feasible. Based on this, the scheme was taken out from the Schemes for the Tenth Five Year Plan. However, a proposal to revive the project of construction of a complex at Hyderabad is again under serious consideration of the Ministry.

Contract labourers for sanitation work

†*383. SHRI NARAYAN SINGH KESRI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any decision to impose ban on permanent employment of 'Safai Karamcharis' and decided to appoint contract labourers for sanitation work;

(b) if so, the details thereof,

(c) if not, the reasons for appointment of contract labourers for sanitation work in all PSUs like Banks and Airports Authority of India etc;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.